

I will be going home to rally the community, because right now today is Friday, and children are learning in our schools. Why punish them, make them the victims of the lack of resources, credentialed teachers, and the lack of a plan that all of us can agree with?

I happen to have agreed with the initial step to at least solve a problem temporarily, but we know that a temporary solution is not the best.

We need to be able to have those children meet the basic test standards, but, more importantly, we have to reflect on changing these—

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ARRINGTON). The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Very tough test standards that don't test the child's knowledge. So—

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has again expired.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, to that school district, to the city of Houston—

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman is no longer recognized.

#### HONORING MAJOR STEPHEN DEL BAGNO

(Mr. KNIGHT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KNIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor one of our fallen heroes, Major Stephen Del Bagno of the United States Air Force Air Demonstration Squadron, more commonly known as the Thunderbirds, who lost his life this past month.

Major Del Bagno came from my district, from Valencia, California, and exemplified the skill and professionalism that we expect from our airmen.

Major Del Bagno was the very first F-35 pilot to join the ranks of the Thunderbird squadron.

Tragically, Stephen Del Bagno lost his life earlier this month during a training exercise at the Nevada Test and Training Range. While he is no longer with us, his legacy continues in the hearts and minds of future aviators he inspired.

I sat with my wife at his funeral a few weeks back and I watched the missing man formation of F-35s and F-16s, and I listened to his father and his teammates talk about Major Del Bagno. They talked about what a great pilot he was, but they also talked about what a great mentor he was and what a good dude Major Del Bagno was, and that is what he wanted to be recognized as and remembered as.

So America lost one of its finest pilots in his passing.

May God bless him and may he rest in peace.

□ 1215

#### HONORING THE LIFE OF RACHAEL PARKER

(Mr. KIHUEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KIHUEN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to remember the life of Rachael Parker. Rachael attended the Route 51 festival in Las Vegas on October 1.

Rachael worked as a record technician at the Manhattan Beach Police Department for 10 years. She was known as the "matron" of the police department's front desk.

Rachael always treated people the same, no matter their circumstances. She loved her family, and had a passion for animals. She rescued two dogs, that she loved more than anything else.

Rachael always went out of her way to help those in need. Everyone knew her and remembers her as being a gifted, kindhearted, and caring woman.

I would like to extend my condolences to Rachael Parker's family and friends. Please know that the city of Las Vegas, the State of Nevada, and the whole country grieve with you.

#### RECOGNIZING THE CHATHAM-SAVANNAH COUNTER NARCOTICS TEAM

(Mr. CARTER of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Chatham-Savannah Counter Narcotics Team, also known as CNT.

In 2017, CNT and the DEA identified a drug distribution group operating throughout Chatham County, and learned that a large drug transaction was to take place. With this knowledge, CNT conducted drug operations at various hotels, covering several local jurisdictions.

On March 25, 2018, CNT seized 25 kilograms, or 55 pounds of cocaine, and made six arrests, which is the largest single cocaine seizure in CNT's history. The confiscated cocaine had an estimated street value of \$4 million.

Cocaine is a highly addictive and mind-altering drug that poisons communities and tears families apart. I applaud CNT's groundbreaking work, which makes the entire Savannah community a better place to live.

#### THE HOUSE MAJORITY'S GREAT INJUSTICE

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, the majority in this House has just exacted a great injustice. The unwarranted, unjust, forced resignation of a sworn officer of this United States House, the House Chaplain, Patrick Conroy, is a

complete, complete violation of justice. It is also a complete violation of the rules of this House and the 229-year precedents of this House.

As well, Speaker PAUL RYAN's unilateral decision to remove the House Chaplain, who is elected by the entire membership of this House, is simply wrong. The Chaplain deserves just and fair treatment by every Member of this body that would attend to any Member who is subjected to such treatment or any citizen in our country who appears before the law. Every life in our Nation should matter.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Ms. KAPTUR. And the lives and reputations of the officers of this House should matter. Our heads should hang low today—

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman is no longer recognized.

Ms. KAPTUR. \* \* \*

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, Father Conroy has served this institute honorably for the past seven years. He is only one of two Roman Catholic clerics ever to have served as pastor for the U.S. House of Representatives since the founding of our Republic 229 years ago, of 60 who have served. As an elected officer of this House, the Chaplain serves as its spiritual leader, abiding the heavy weight that the Chaplain bears for hundreds of Members, their families, hundreds more staff members, visitors and others who seek guidance and help. From what is trickling out in the media, this political crucifixion of Father Conway was executed following a visit from Speaker Paul Ryan's Chief of Staff in which Fr. Conway's resignation was demanded. Fr. Conroy complied. He transmitted a letter of resignation under coercion on April 15. On April 16, under cover of convoluted parliamentary procedure, with the vast membership of this institution unnoticed and unaware, Speaker Ryan requested ascension from the entire body. But who in this House even knew procedurally what was occurring? There was no notice. There was no prior House official proceeding to hear this matter. There was no one to object as no Member other than the Speaker and his inner circle knew what the Speaker was demanding.

In such an important matter of a human being's life and reputation, what happened to our House Rules? What happened to regular order? This forced resignation is without cause. It is unprecedented. It is wrong. It is simply a unilateral decision and abuse of power by the Speaker who himself will soon leave Congress. He should hang his head. The Speaker solely delivered an honorable man up for political crucifixion without hearing or trial.

Justice in such a consequential action demands the full attention and engagement of this entire House. It is not the prerogative of a single individual, no matter how powerful that individual may feel he is. The Speaker's action is a violation of the fundamental Rules of this House. It cannot stand the light of scrutiny. This consequential decision about a human being's life was summarily imposed with no justice, no consultation, and importantly a complete abdication of our House Rules and Constitutional precedents. It must be overturned. Justice and regular order must return to this House.

According to the Pew Research Center, Religious 'nones' are underrepresented in Congress compared with U.S. adults overall: Christian: 485 members, 90.7 percent of Congress, 71 percent of U.S. adults (Protestant: 299, 55.9 percent, 48 percent; Baptist: 72, 13.5 percent, 15 percent; Methodist: 44, 8.2 percent, 5 percent; Anglican/Episcopal: 35, 6.5 percent, 1 percent; Presbyterian: 35, 6.5 percent, 2 percent; Lutheran: 26, 4.9 percent, 4 percent; Congregationalist: 5, 0.9 percent, 1 percent; Non-denominational Protestant: 8, 1.5 percent, 6 percent; Pentecostal: 2, 0.4 percent, 5 percent; Restorationist: 2, 0.4 percent, 2 percent; Adventist: 2, 0.4 percent, 1 percent; Christian Scientist: 2, 0.4 percent, <1 percent; Holiness: 1, 0.2 percent, 1 percent; Reformed: 1, 0.2 percent, <1 percent; Anabaptist: 0, 0 percent, <1 percent; Friends/Quakers: 0, 0 percent, <1 percent; Pietist: 0, 0 percent, <1 percent; Unspecified/other: 64, 12 percent, 5 percent) (Catholic: 168, 31.4 percent, 21 percent) (Mormon: 13, 2.4 percent, 2 percent) (Orthodox Christian: 5, 0.9 percent, <1 percent); Jewish: 30, 5.6 percent, 2 percent; Buddhist: 3, 0.6 percent, 1 percent; Muslim: 2, 0.4 percent, 1 percent; Hindu: 3, 0.6 percent, 1 percent; Unitarian Universalist: 1, 0.2 percent, <1 percent; Unaffiliated: 1, 0.2 percent, 23 percent; Other faiths: 0, 0 percent, 2 percent; Don't Know/refused: 10, 1.9 percent, 1 percent. For more information: "Faith on the Hill, the religious composition of the 115th Congress," <<http://www.pewforum.org/2017/01/03/faith-on-the-hill-115/>>."

Excerpt from rule 2, section 1 of U.S. House Rules:

#### Rule II other officers and officials

##### Elections

1. There shall be elected at the commencement of each Congress, to continue in office until their successors are chosen and qualified, a Clerk, a Sergeant-at-Arms, a Chief Administrative Officer, and a Chaplain. Each of these officers shall take an oath to support the Constitution of the United States, and for the true and faithful exercise of the duties of the office to the best of the knowledge and ability of the officer, and to keep the secrets of the House. Each of these officers shall appoint all of the employees of the department concerned provided for by law. The Clerk, Sergeant-at-Arms, and Chief Administrative Officer may be removed by the House or by the Speaker.

Page 363 of house rules and manual of 115th congress: <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/HMAN-115/pdf/HMAN-115.pdf>

Excerpt from article 1 section 2 of U.S. Constitution

The House of Representatives shall chuse their Speaker and other Officers; \* \* \*

The officers of the House are the Speaker, who has always been one of its Members and whose term as Speaker must expire with the term as a Member; and the Clerk, Sergeant-at-Arms, Chief Administrative Officer, and Chaplain (I, 187), no one of whom has ever been chosen from the sitting membership of the House and who continue in office until their successors are chosen and qualified (I, 187). In one case the officers continued through the entire Congress succeeding that in which they were elected (I, 244, 263). Former officers include Doorkeeper (abolished by the 104th Congress, see §663b, *infra*) and Postmaster (abolished during the 102d Congress, see §668, *infra*). The House formerly provided by special rule that the Clerk should continue in office until another should be chosen (I, 187, 188, 235, 244). Currently, certain statutes impose on the officers duties that contemplate their continuance (I, 14, 15; 2 U.S.C. 5602).

Page 13 of house rules and manual of 115th congress: <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/HMAN-115/pdf/HMAN-115.pdf>

[From The Hill, Apr. 27, 2018]

#### DEM LAWMAKER LOOKING INTO WHETHER RYAN VIOLATED HOUSE RULES BY FORCING OUT CHAPLAIN

(By Avery Anapol)

A Democratic Ohio lawmaker is looking into whether Speaker Paul Ryan (R-Wis.) violated House procedure when he sought the resignation of House Chaplain Patrick Conroy.

Rep. Marcy Kaptur told Roll Call that she believes a House vote is necessary to remove a chaplain, as the position is considered an "officer of the House."

Conroy submitted a letter of resignation on Thursday at Ryan's request, and a bipartisan group of lawmakers told The Hill that Conroy was forced out by the speaker.

"[His departure was] more than a little suspicious," Kaptur told Roll Call.

The reason behind Conroy's ouster is unclear, though Democratic sources told The Hill it was because Conroy offered a prayer on the House floor that could have been interpreted as critical of the GOP tax law, legislation strongly championed by Ryan.

Kaptur said she wants to find a bipartisan solution, which could include a privileged resolution to reinstate Conroy.

"I don't want to make it a partisan thing," she said. "This is about a person and justice has to prevail."

"For me as a Catholic, with everything else that has gone in my church with cover-ups and all the rest, I feel a special responsibility to not have someone's reputation damaged," she said, adding that she thinks the chaplain was "deeply hurt" by the situation.

[From Roll Call, Apr. 26, 2018]

#### KAPTUR EXPLORING LEGISLATIVE REPRIEVE FOR OUSTED HOUSE CHAPLAIN

Ohio Democrat said any legislation she proposes would be bipartisan.

(By Lindsey McPherson)

Rep. Marcy Kaptur does not believe Speaker Paul D. Ryan has authority to remove House Chaplain Patrick J. Conroy without a vote of the House. And she's exploring legislation to prevent his ouster.

Conroy submitted a letter of resignation April 15 at the speaker's request that was read on the House floor the following day. Ryan's spokeswoman AshLee Strong confirmed that Ryan sought the Jesuit priest's resignation but did not provide a reason why.

Rep. Walter B. Jones, R-N.C., and Joe Crowley, D-N.Y., both pointed to a prayer that Conroy delivered on the tax overhaul as the reason he was asked to leave. Jones said he spoke with Conroy and he confirmed that, saying the only intended meaning of the prayer was that the tax bill should help everyone.

"As legislation on taxes continues to be debated this week and next, may all Members be mindful that the institutions and structures of our great Nation guarantee the opportunities that have allowed some to achieve great success, while others continue to struggle," Conroy said his Nov. 6 prayer on the House floor. "May their efforts these days guarantee that there are not winners and losers under new tax laws, but benefits balanced and shared by all Americans."

A senior GOP aide said there was not a specific prayer that led to Ryan's decision. Conroy's resignation comes more than five months after he delivered the prayer on the tax debate but just days after Ryan announced his plans to retire from Congress at the end of his term.

"If we cannot protect freedom of prayer on the floor of the House, there is no hope for America. None," Jones said. "This chaplain

is elected by all the members we vote on. And this should be a vote by all the members for him not to be here."

#### NO RULE FOR REMOVAL?

Like Jones, Kaptur also spoke with Conroy, who was reluctant to talk about his resignation but upon her pressing revealed it was a request from the speaker.

"I said, 'But why?' and he didn't say anything," she said. "So I went back to my staff and . . . looked at the rules of procedure for the House under the section dealing with the chaplain. . . . As an officer of the House, this should have consideration if there's no cause. I mean what's the cause?"

Indeed the Jefferson's Manual and Rules of the House of Representatives identifies the chaplain as an officer of the House, along with the speaker, clerk, sergeant-at-arms and chief administrative officer. The manual says the officers shall be elected at the commencement of each Congress.

While the speaker's term expires with the conclusion of each Congress, the other officers "continue in office until their successors are chosen and qualified," the manual says.

"The clerk, sergeant-at-arms, and chief administrative officer may be removed by the House or by the speaker," the manual says, while making no mention of the procedure for removing the chaplain.

If the matter should be subject to a vote it's unclear whether Conroy waived that by submitting his resignation.

#### LEGISLATIVE REMEDY?

Kaptur is continuing to dig into the matter. The longest-serving woman in the House said she has not seen anything like this in her nearly three dozen years serving in this institution.

"I don't think it's fair," she said, calling the Conroy's ouster "more than a little suspicious."

Asked if there's a procedural action members could take, like filing a privileged resolution reinstate Conroy, Kaptur said, "I am certainly of that mind. But I want to work on a bipartisan basis. I don't want to make it a partisan thing. This is about a person and justice has to prevail."

Kaptur said any procedural action would be about treating Conroy, with the respect he deserves as an officer of the House.

"For me as a Catholic with everything else that has gone in my church with cover-ups and all the rest, I feel a special responsibility to not have someone's reputation damaged," she said.

Kaptur said she was surprised that Ryan, who is also Catholic, would make this decision. She said Conroy didn't say much when she spoke with him, but noted, "I think he's deeply hurt."

#### GROUP FORMED TO VET SUCCESSORS

While Kaptur and others look for ways to keep Conroy in his position—Crowley, for example, is calling on Ryan to reconsider his decision—conversations about the next House chaplain have begun.

Ryan has asked Rep. Doug Collins, R-Ga., to lead a bipartisan group of members in looking at potential replacements for Conroy. Rep. Emanuel Cleaver, D-Mo., will serve as the lead member of the group for the Democrats.

Collins, a military chaplain for 17 years, said there's no set number of members for the group yet or timeline for the group to submit recommendations. He predicted it could take a few months and a replacement would likely not be ready before Conroy's May 24 resignation date.

"This decision will be on the speaker ultimately," Collins said.

Collins said he is not looking for candidates of a specific faith, just ones who have

"a heart for people," relate well to others and can listen.

Rep. Mark Walker, chairman of the Congressional Prayer Caucus, is also serving on the group that will recommend the next chaplain. Both he and Collins said they had no issues with Conroy and were not familiar with Ryan's reason for asking him to resign.

As for successors, Walker, who served as a pastor for nearly 20 years before running for Congress, said he's looking for someone with a nondenominational background that has a multicultural congregation or an otherwise diverse background.

The North Carolina Republican also said he'd prefer "somebody who has a little age, that has adult children, that kind of can connect with the bulk of the body here, Republicans or Democrats as far as what we're going through back home—you've got the wife, the family, things you encounter—that has some counseling experience or has managed or worked with people, maybe a larger church size, being able to have that understanding or that experience."

While Walker had initially specified someone with children and said "having somebody who's walked in those shoes I think allows you to immediately relate a little bit more than others."

Catholic priests take a vow of celibacy. Walker followed up with the reporters he made his comments to clarify he was not disqualifying Catholic priests because of that vow.

"When I say family experience I mean that you've been a priest or pastor over a parishioner with families who have situations, adult children, those kinds of things."

#### REMEMBERING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WILLOW ISLAND DISASTER

(Mr. MCKINLEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark the 40th anniversary of the Willow Island disaster, when 51 construction workers perished in the deadliest construction accident in United States history.

These men were building cooling tower No. 2 at the Pleasants Power Station in West Virginia. Just after 10 o'clock on that tragic day, as the third lift of concrete was being lifted, the cable housing on the crane went slack and the crane collapsed in on the tower.

The concrete that had been poured the previous day then started to unwrap the tower, taking out the scaffolding. All the men who were on the scaffolding at that time were killed, and many workers on the ground were buried under the falling debris.

This horrible accident spurred a national conversation about more construction safety and led to improved standards. And for those of us who have worked in the construction industry, it underscored just how fragile life is and that paying attention to every detail can make a difference whether we go home or not.

This is a tragedy that is still felt throughout the Pleasants County community. Angie Colvin, who was just in the fifth grade at the time of the dis-

aster, lost 12 family members that day, including her father.

The Willow Island community will gather this evening at the memorial erected in honor of those 51 workers. Our prayers are with the entire community on this day of remembrance.

#### HONORING THE SERVICE OF JAMES ZECCA

(Ms. TENNEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. TENNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a remarkable public servant and close friend in New York's 22nd District, Mr. James Zecca, of Utica, New York.

At the end of May, Jim will retire from his position as the director of the Madison County Department of Solid Waste and Sanitation, a position he started and created in 1988. A few years ago, a colleague of Jim's said that his "forward thinking attitude and determination has made Madison County a leader in recycling in New York State." He ensured the county was open and transparent to everyone, always including the community as a whole in every process.

Even though he works in Madison County during the day, Jim has served his community, his own community in Utica, the city of Utica, for many years. He served as a city councilman representing the Second District, and also a councilman-at-large during his time on the Utica Common Council.

Jim has always been a champion of the little guy, the small-business owner, and the citizens who have been hurt by government incompetence, overreach, and yes, even corruption.

It is my honor to congratulate Jim on 30 years of exceptional service to Madison County and our entire community. His hard work, courage, and compassion will be missed by all.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my colleagues join me in congratulating Jim on his retirement, and best wishes for the future, and also, for his tireless effort in making America great again.

Congratulations, Jim.

#### RECOGNIZING SESAME PLACE ON ITS DESIGNATION AS A CERTIFIED AUTISM CENTER

(Mr. FITZPATRICK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, April is Autism Awareness Month, and I would like to recognize a family landmark in my district that has gone the extra mile to assist individuals with autism.

Sesame Place, a theme park located in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, in my district, and my former employer, was recently designated as a Certified Autism Center. This distinction, developed by the International Board of

Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards, certifies facilities that are compatible for those with autism, and their families.

To earn this designation, all staff at Sesame Place underwent extensive training on autism awareness and sensitivity. When the park reopens for its 38th season this year, it will also include two new "quiet rooms" with adjustable lights and noise-canceling headphones.

Mr. Speaker, I am extremely proud to say that Sesame Place in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, is the first theme park in the world to be designated as a Certified Autism Center. I would like to thank the staff and all of my friends at Sesame Place for making the park a hospitable and fun place for our entire community.

#### CONGRATULATING NEBRASKA'S THEDFORD HIGH SCHOOL NATIONAL SCIENCE BOWL TEAM

(Mr. SMITH of Nebraska asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Nebraska's Thedford High School National Science Bowl Team on winning their regional competition and securing a position in next week's tournament in our Nation's capital.

The National Science Bowl is one of the largest and most prestigious academic competitions, having been created in 1991 by the Office of Science within the U.S. Department of Energy.

Our team from Thedford High School, comprised of students David Gordon, Andrew Gordon, Rhiannon Painter, Kalee Jepsen, and Ariel Bryant, and led by Coach Geri Smith, brings pride to Nebraska's Third District.

I know the constituents I represent join me in wishing them well as they begin the tournament on Sunday, April 29, 2018. On behalf of the people of Nebraska's Third District, I commend the Thedford High School National Science Bowl Team for this noteworthy accomplishment, and wish them well in the competition.

Go Knights.

#### HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF BILL MULDER

(Mr. ARRINGTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ARRINGTON. Mr. Speaker, today I introduced legislation to honor the life of a high school buddy of mine and a decorated Navy SEAL, Bill Mulder. Bill was a true American hero who served our country with honor and distinction.

Like many of our troops, Bill's greatest fight wasn't on the battlefield; it was the struggle that often ensues from the mental, emotional, and physical wear and tear from military service. On top of that, people like Bill,